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FM AMEMBASSY VILNIUS

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INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RHEHNSC/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 000773

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STATE FOR P, EUR, NEA, PM, IO, PASS NSC

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TAGS: MARR MOPS PREL LE LH

SUBJECT: LITHUANIA WILL MAKE MODEST CONTRIBUTION TO UNIFIL,  
BUT PROBABLY NOT COMBAT TROOPS

REF: STATE 134133

¶1. (U) Classified by Ambassador John A. Cloud for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

¶2. (C) On the margins of the Ambassador's presentation of credentials ceremony August 17, top Lithuanian foreign policy planners expressed Lithuania's willingness in some way to contribute to UNIFIL. Ambassador delivered reftel demarche to MFA Under Secretary Albinas Januska and Head of MFA's Americas Department Jonas Paslauskas immediately before the ceremony. Januska said that the GOL would do "something" for UNIFIL, but that its scope and nature was not yet defined. He said that small humanitarian or financial contributions from Lithuania were possible, but doubted that Lithuania would send peacekeeping troops. (Note: MFA and Defense Ministry officials had earlier mentioned the possibility of sending Lithuania's water purification unit, but they admitted that it was too early to comment on the likelihood or feasibility of this option.)

¶3. (U) Publicly, the GOL continues to make positive noises about helping support a peacekeeping mission in Lebanon. In remarks to the press August 17, PM Kirkilas said, "It is in the interests of Lithuania as a member of the United Nations to establish peace as soon as possible and contribute to it as much as possible."

¶4. (C) Comment: While we believe that there is genuine political will to contribute to UNIFIL, we take our interlocutors at all levels at their word that any contribution will be modest. Lithuania's other commitments abroad, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq, remain paramount to the GOL, foreclosing the possibility of significant contributions to other hotspots like Lebanon.

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